

## INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING

## Foreign agencies in US cause concern

*Some are questioning the activities here of the agents of Taiwan, the Philippines and South Africa*

**C**oncern in Congress today about the operations of "friendly" intelligence and security services inside the United States focuses on Taiwan, the Philippines and South Africa.

**Taiwan:** According to a 1978 report of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the FBI and the CIA knew about Taiwan's intelligence operations in the United States against that government's opponents throughout the 1970s. US-based operations began in 1971 with Nixon's overtures to the People's Republic of China "with the objective of actively countering the rise of pro-[China] groups," but they were overhauled shortly after the conclusion of the Vietnam War in 1975. A new intelligence chief, Wong Hsi-ling, was dispatched to Washington, and a much wider program was begun to monitor, infiltrate and disrupt the US activities of Peking sympathizers and members of the Taiwan Independence Movement. By 1978, according to CIA estimates, there were 45 intelligence officers in the United States; the FBI and the CIA placed 10 to 25 of them at American universities. The job of those on campuses was to recruit a network of paid and volunteer informants to spy on fellow students and professors. Among those recruited were four prominent Sino-American professors.

Yet, according to the Washington Post, when Taiwan's was added in 1977 to the FBI's "criteria list" of intelligence services targeted for surveillance and wiretaps, it was much more for fomenting propaganda against normalization with China than for its harassment of US opponents. The United States and Taiwan are said to have continued to cooperate on electronic and human intelligence operations against China.

Not until 1981 did the State Department and the FBI, under pressure from Congress, start to actively coordinate and aggressively develop information on harassment by Taiwanese agents. This occurred in the aftermath of the suspected murder in Taiwan of Chen Wen-cheng, a professor at Carnegie-Mellon and a leading member of the Taiwan Independence Movement. Chen's body had been found hours after he had been questioned by security officers, and the US government was skeptical of the official Taiwanese story that his death had been a suicide or an accident.

Last year, Henry Liu, a prominent Taiwanese author and opponent of the Taiwan government, was assassinated at his home in Daly City, Calif. It subsequently emerged that the murder was carried out by intelligence officials in collaboration with underworld figures. In April, Wong Hsi-ling, who had returned to Taiwan to head the entire intelligence service, was tried and convicted along with two assistants of Liu's murder. The prosecution portrayed the murder as a private act to settle a grudge.

The trial was seen by skeptics as an effort to appease the Reagan administration. If this was the purpose, there may have been some success. Calls for a cutoff of US military sales to Taiwan, tied by the so-called Solarz Amendment to the intimidation and harassment of individuals in the United States, came mainly from Democrats. And, although the underworld gang recruited for the murder has been vigorously investigated, the Taiwan intelligence service itself was taken off the "criteria list" some time after 1977 and, at least as of last summer, had not been returned.

**The Philippines:** The CIA reported in October 1973, according to the Senate committee, that Philippine intelligence "had begun sending intelligence officers to the United States in May 1973 for the purpose of infiltrating, monitoring and possibly counteracting the threat of anti-Marcos groups headed by Raul Manglapus, Antonio Villegas and Eugenio Lopez." Knowledgeable CIA officials were said not to know "what means might be used to 'counteract' those groups, but did not rule out the possibility of violence." The CIA listed 19 Filipino intelligence officers assigned to the United States.

The FBI began an investigation. However, it was terminated, the committee found, because the CIA's top officer in the Philippines, George Kalaris, intervened with the State Department through the US ambassador, William Sullivan. Kalaris reportedly asked Sullivan that it be made clear that the embassy's position "is that there should be no active investigation of official Philippine Government representatives in the US without advance consultation with the Embassy and CIA headquarters, the reason being that such investigation would result in reciprocal action against American intelligence personnel in the Philippines." Thus, by the time of the committee's in-

vestigation in 1978, neither the CIA nor the FBI knew whether the 19 Filipino officers remained in the United States or had returned home.

Not until a 1982 Defense Intelligence Agency report on the monitoring of anti-Marcos activists was leaked to the press in the aftermath of Benigno Aquino's murder did the State Department announce that there would be an FBI investigation of harassment by Filipino agents. Anti-Marcos activists, previously wary of the US government, came forward with stories of break-ins, surveillance and threats. Sources familiar with the FBI investigation say that it has turned up little. There has been ample evidence, however, both in the inquiry into Aquino's assassination and in the just-completed trial and acquittal of Gen. Fabian Ver and others for the murder, that monitoring of US activists does take place.

**South Africa:** South Africa's service, formerly known as BOSS, was not included in the 1978 study but only because the Senate committee ran out of time. Enough anecdotal evidence was said to have been received by the committee to suggest a pattern similar to those of the countries studied.

Documents and recent interviews confirm this assessment. "The CIA has traditionally had a warm relationship with BOSS," John Stockwell, a former CIA officer who once worked in southern Africa, said in a recent interview. "Top CIA people would sometimes get themselves assigned there as their last assignment. It was a prize retirement post." They did not have much to do, he added; the South Africans prohibited clandestine operations and limited the activities of CIA operatives to passing data supplied by BOSS on to Washington.

These close ties are illustrated by the case of Dennis Brutus, a South African anti-apartheid activist and Swarthmore professor who was granted political asylum in the United States in 1983. The State Department judged Brutus to have a "justified fear of persecution" by South African authorities inside South Africa and by South African agents in neighboring Zimbabwe, his birthplace.

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Throughout Brutus' legal proceedings, government attorneys refused to disclose whether classified, noncriminal information in his files had been received from or disseminated to BOSS, the South African security service. Nevertheless, there are several indications among documents released to Brutus under the Freedom of Information Act that some classified FBI data on him originated in South Africa - and thus with BOSS. Moreover, a former South African intelligence agent, Gordon Winter, wrote in a 1981 memoir that he spied on Brutus' anti-apartheid activities in London for BOSS between 1968 and 1975 and was aware of information exchanges on Brutus between BOSS and the United States government.

About South African intelligence activities against US-based dissidents there is little hard evidence but plenty of rumors. Brutus and many other South Africans living here describe odd occurrences that have convinced them of surveillance. South African students participating in anti-apartheid demonstrations in Washington say they have been watched and photographed. There are rumors of buggings and infiltrations, as well as stories about students returning to South Africa and being questioned about such personal information as the posters on their dorm walls. These stories, although unconfirmed, have intimidated many South Africans in the United States into silence.

In recent interviews, congressional sources who have been critical of the Reagan administration in the past for inaction concerning foreign harassment of US residents last week expressed some satisfaction with current efforts.

The FBI investigations of Philippine intelligence, though showing little so far, are said to have been aggressive.

South Africa is said to have earlier this year been placed on the FBI's "criteria list."

And for the first time, the US government implied it was willing to cut off arms sales to Taiwan when Lee Yapping, a Taiwanese publisher living in California, was arrested in September for sedition after returning to Taiwan for a visit.

Other administration critics like Michael Glennon remain unconvinced. Before a House committee earlier this year, Glennon proposed legislative reforms that would not depend on shifting political winds in Washington. These would include strengthening the Solarz Amendment, requiring regular "country reports" on domestic harassment by foreign governments and forbidding complicity by US agencies in such harassment.

"The problem affects all Americans," Glennon testified. "If [constitutional] rights are abridged by a foreign secret police force, it is not simply the individual 'target' who is their victim - it is our entire body politic."

"For information is the lifeblood of our democracy. . . . We need to hear what these emigres have to say. They have important messages on the terror of authoritarianism. We need to be reminded what tyranny is all about."

- JEFF MCCONNELL